AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (canceled)

2. (currently amended) A hardener as claimed in claim 22 [[1,]] wherein the hardener also comprises at least one UV-absorber.

3. (currently amended) A hardener as claimed in claim 22 [[1,]] wherein the hardener also comprises at least one free radical scavenger.

4. (currently amended) A hardener as claimed in claim 22 [[1,]] wherein the hardener also comprises at least one antioxidant.

5. (currently amended) A hardener as claimed in claim 22 [[1,]] wherein the hardener also comprises at least one dye and/or pigment.

6. (currently amended) A hardener as claimed in claim 22 [[1,]] wherein the hardener also comprises at least one filler.

7. (currently amended) A hardener as claimed in claim 22 [[1,]] wherein the hardener also comprises at least one additive.

Claims 8-17 (canceled)

18. (currently amended) A cured epoxy material, manufactured from an epoxy resin and a hardener as defined by claim 22 [[1]].

Claims 19-21 (canceled)

22. (new) A hardener for curing of epoxy resins, said hardener comprising a sol being obtained by hydrolysis and condensation of silane compound in a solvent, wherein the silane compound is represented by the formula:

$(X\text{-}B\text{-})_n\ Si(\text{-}Y)_{4-n}$

where:

$n = 1$, $X = NR_1R_2$;

R_1, R_2 are both hydrogen;

B is a spacing group chosen from saturated or unsaturated C_1-C_{18}-alkylene, substituted or non-substituted arylene, while the carbon chains of the stated compounds may include one or more of the elements oxygen, nitrogen, sulphur, phosphorus, silicon and boron; and

Y is ethoxy or methoxy;

wherein the reaction product obtained by the hydrolysis and condensation includes the solvent particle forming condensate products which have free amino groups on the surface, and volatile components which include alcohols and water; and

wherein the sol is obtained by removing the volatile components in the reaction product.

23. (new) A hardener as claimed in claim 22, wherein free amino groups at the surface of the particle-forming condensation product in the sol have been entirely or partly converted with reactive compounds such as epoxides, acid derivatives, blocked and non-blocked isocyanates and compounds of the type R-X, where X is chosen among halogen, substituted or non-substituted alkoxyl, phenoxyl, amine, carboxylate, sulphonate, sulphinate, phosphonate and phosphinate, and R is chosen among non-substituted saturated and unsaturated C_1-C_{24} alkyl, substituted saturated or unsaturated C_1-C_{24} alkyl, substituted or non-substituted aryl, aliphatic or aromatic carbonyl, wherein the carbon chains of said compounds may optionally include one or more of the elements nitrogen, sulphur, silicon and boron and groups chosen among condensation products of one or more type of chemical compounds such as acids, alcohols, phenols, amines, aldehydes and epoxides.

24. (new) A method for curing epoxy resins, comprising the steps of

(i) producing the sol as defined in claim 22 by removing the volatile components from the reaction product; and

(ii) mixing the sol, subsequent to possible storage, with an epoxy resin so that the epoxy resin is cured.

25. (new) A method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the volatile products are alcohols and water and the volatile components are removed from the reaction product in step i) prior to step ii).

26. (new) A hardener for curing of epoxy resins as

claimed in claim 22, wherein the solvent is a mixture of butyldiglycol water.

27. (new) A hardener for curing of epoxy resins as claimed in claim 22, wherein the hydrolysis and the condensation are conducted by heating the mixture of the solvent and the particle forming condensate products in an oil bath to 110°C under reflux for 45 minutes.

28. (new) A hardener for curing of epoxy resins as claimed in claim 22, wherein the volatile components are removed in an oil bath to 110°C and a vacuum gradient from 1000 mbar-20 mbar.